

Application Serial No. 09/989,714
In reply to Office Action of 30 September 2004

Attorney Docket No. 82937

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 4-8 and 11-24 were pending at the onset of this response. Claims 4-6, 19 and 21-24 were allowed. Claims 7, 8, 12-18 and 20 were rejected. Claim 11 was objected to. By this response, amendments are proposed to claims 8, 11, 13, and 15. Applicants hereby direct that claims 7, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 20 be cancelled without prejudice.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's extension of an offer to allow claim 11 if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening limitations. Claim 11 has been amended to provide these inclusions and its allowance is respectfully requested.

With respect to claim 8, claim 12 (which depends from claim 8), and claim 13, they stand rejected as anticipated by Stone (reference D: U.S. Patent No. 6,523,137). This response proposes the amendment of claims 8 and 13 to depend from amended claim 11, which as mentioned above is in a form the Examiner has offered to allow. Therefore claim 8, 12 (i.e. by virtue of depending from claim 8) and 13, would at least include method steps which patentably distinguish over Stone. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 8, 12, and 13 are allowable too, which action is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 also stands rejected upon Stone based upon 35 U.S.C. 102(e), and this response proposes its amendment to

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depend from allowed claim 19. For like reasoning as Applicants have applied above to claims 8, 12 and 13, it is submitted that claim 15 is allowable, which action is respectfully requested.

In summary, Applicants request entry of this amendment, and in addition to the heretofore allowed claims 4-6, 19 and 21-24 request allowance of claims 8, 11-13 and 15.

Re-examination and favorable reconsideration in light of the above amendments and comments is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone Michael F. Oglo, Attorney for Applicants, at 401-832-4736 if, in the opinion of the Examiner, such a telephone call would serve to expedite the prosecution of the subject patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By

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